Lynn Heritage State Park

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Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management
Division of Forests and Parks

Revised 1999

The Park that Celebrate

Welcome

By the turn of the 20th century the City of Lynn was the largest manufacturing center of shoes in the world. In a remarkable blen of architecture, art, exhibits, and public programs, Lynn Heritage State Park celebrates the city's rich industrial and cultural history and provides opportunities for establishing new traditions. The park has two locations: the Visitors Center on Washington Street and the Waterfront Park, a short distance away, on the Lynnway.

A Lasting History

Settled in 1629, Lynn flourished as a plantation and site to early leather and iron industries. Shoemaking began in 1635 as a traditional hand craft, often done at home during the winter. In 1750, Welsh immigrant John Adam Dagyr introduced local shoemakers to improved techniques of making high quality women's shoes. By the early 1800s, shoemaking had become a prosperous industry, supplying the nation through nearby maritim ports. Machinery introduced in the 1850s ushered in the modern shoe factory, creating work opportunities that attracted labor from all over New England and later from Europe.

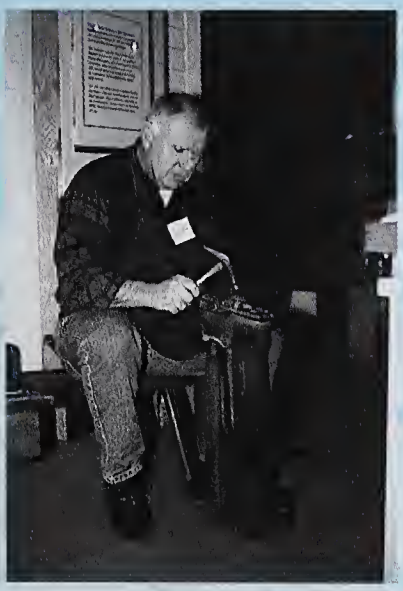
In 1882, Elihu Thomson brought a thriving electrical business to Lynn. These included manufacturing industrial motors and arc lighting. His groundbreaking experiments with electricity led to the formation of General Electric with Thomas Edison in 1892. Shoemaking declined in the 1920s and 30s while General Electri expanded. During World War II the nation's first jet engine was built under great secrecy at the Lynn plant. These fascinating stories and more are included in the Visitors Center exhibits.

The Visitors Center

590 Washington Street

Located in a turn-of-the-century brick building, visitors are first welcomed by a beautiful courtyard. Inside, the City of Lynn's history unfolds. Examine an authentic early 1800s shoemaker's shop. Compare the craft and tools of a hand made shoe with a factory made shoe. Experience the struggle of shoe workers during the Strike of 1860. Find out why Lydia Pinkham's medicinals were known the world over. Discover how General Electric developed the nation's first successful jet engine. Hear interesting stories of Lynn's past at the "Oral History Lunch Counter." A changing exhibit gallery displays the talents of local artists and special presentations of local history. The public can explore the exhibits on their own or group tours can be arranged.

The Visitors Center, including a spacious multi-purpose room, is available for meetings and functions by community organizations and other groups by reservation.



An interpreter demonstrates shoemaking.
(Photo by Alec Gillman)

Left: Celebrations of art and music demonstrate the rich heritage of the City of Lynn.
(Photo by Alec Gillman)

An exhibit of Lydia Pinkham and her medicinals.
(Photo by Kindra Clineff©)

Waterfront Park

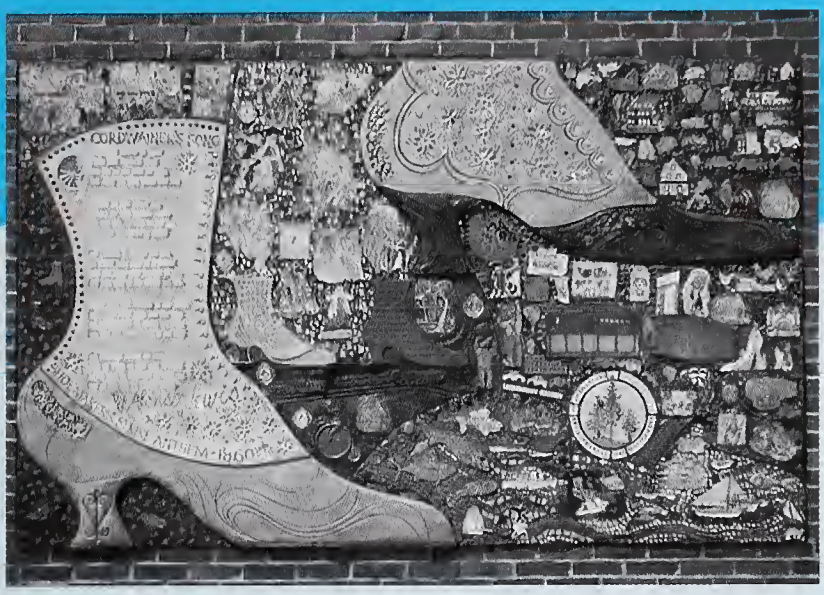
156 Lynnway

Sweeping views of the Massachusetts Bay and boats bobbing in Lynn Harbor capture your attention. The park offers 4.5 acres of open space, boardwalk, and impressive mosaic mural depicting th City of Lynn's places and history. Benches and a shade shelter provide a place to rest, and protection to enjoy the season's weather. Summer programs include the popular Seabreeze Conc Series and a variety of festivals. Seasonal ferry service to the Boston Harbor Islands is available on weekends and holidays, ca (617) 233-8666 for more information.

For more information

For information on the Massachusetts State Forests and Parks system or to receive a free "Guide to Recreation" ask the park staff; call DEM's Office of Public Information at (617)727-3180 1-800-831-0569 (within Massachusetts); or visit our web site at: www.state.ma.us/dem/
E-mail address: Mass.Parks@state.ma.us

Left: The downtown Visitors Center at Lynn Heritage State Park.
(Photo by Jenny Beaujean)



Explore the places and history of Lynn along the waterfront park mosaic mural. *(Photo by Kindra Clineff©)*

Things to know. . .

- Visitors Center hours: Wednesday through Sunday, 9:30 AM to 4:30 PM
- Admission is free.
- Group tours may be arranged by scheduling in advance.
- Parking at both locations is limited. Additional free parking is available at the MBTA garage on Market Street.
- Lynn Heritage State Park is wheelchair accessible. Assisted listening equipment is available for better hearing access for park programs and guided tours. Reasonable accommodations available upon request.

About the Massachusetts Heritage State Parks

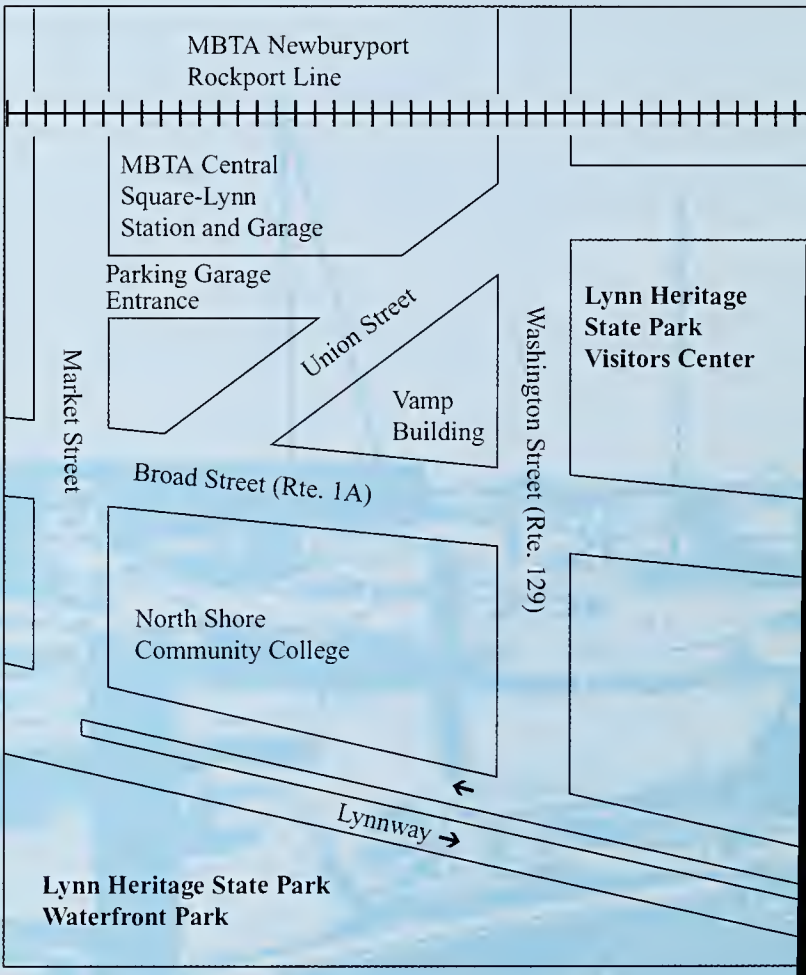
Today, the Heritage State Parks serve as a national model of urban environmental design, historic preservation, and economic revitalization. Established in the 1970s, the parks were built to celebrate the cities' heritage, encourage private development, bring people into downtown, and create urban spaces for the whole community to enjoy. Managed as part of the Massachusetts State Forests and Parks system, Heritage State Parks are located in Fall River, Gardner, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, North Adams (Western Gateway), Roxbury and Uxbridge (Blackstone River and Canal).

Lynn Heritage State Park

590 Washington Street
Lynn, MA 01901
(781) 598-1974

Essex
National Heritage
Area

Lynn Heritage State Park serves as one of eight satellite visitor centers in the Essex National Heritage Area. The U.S. Department of the Interior designated this a National Heritage Area recognizing its unique historical, cultural and natural characteristics.



View of Massachusetts Bay and the nearby city marina along the boardwalk. *(Photo by Stephen Ostrowski)*

Directions

To reach the Visitors Center at the corner of Washington and Union Streets:

From the North: Rtes. 128/I-95 South to exit 44, Rte. 1 South. Take first exit to Rte 129 East. Follow Rte. 129 East to Downtown Lynn. After MBTA commuter rail trestle, Visitors Center will be on the opposite left corner.

From South and West: Rtes. 128/I-95 North to exit 44B. Follow Rte. 129 East to Downtown Lynn. After MBTA commuter rail trestle, Visitors Center will be on the opposite left corner.

From Salem: Route 1A South to Lynn. At North Shore Community College, take a sharp right onto Union Street, then right onto Washington Street. Parking and Visitors Center on left.

From Boston: Route 1A North to Lynnway. Turn left following Rt. 1A onto Market St., then right onto Broad St. At North Shore Community College bear left onto Union Street, next right on Washington Street. Parking and Visitors Center on left.

MBTA Public Transportation to Central Square-Lynn: Bus routes 426, 429, 433, 435/6/7, 439, 441/2, 455; the Newburyport/ Rockport Commuter Rail line.

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Cover: The waterfront park's granite amphitheater.
(Photo by Stephen Ostrowski)